# cookies

Simon St. Laurent

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**Web Development** **$34.95 U.S.A.**

# Inside the Web's most misunderstood programming tool

*Cookies have been praised as a powerful convenience — and damned as Big Brother's way of* keeping intrusively close track of user behavior. Initially introduced in Netscape 1.1 as a way for developers to store tiny amounts of information on client computers, they have spread from CGI programming to JavaScripting, and are an important part of the toolbox for Microsoft Active Server Pages, Java servlets, and Netscape LiveWire development. They deserve a guide of their own, and here it is — complete with coverage of the Internet Engineering Task Force's controversial RFC 2109, which includes both a specification for cookie contents (endorsing and extending the existing Netscape standard) and rules covering the ways servers and browsers handle cookies.

Savvy Web developers are realizing that cookie management is a critical task, with serious implications for Web site architecture. While not a complete solution to Web needs, cookies are more useful than many people know. Let Simon St. Laurent give you the full picture of how cookies fit into your Web toolkit and how they work with other tools:

- The truth about cookies' power to invade privacy, spread viruses, and breach security
- Details to help you create cookies with maximum functionality, including client-side cookie scripting and server-side cookie applications
- Step-by-step instructions on delivering content tailored to individual users
- Insights into the latest improvements to the cookie standard and new specifications from Microsoft and Netscape/Verisign, including the Open Profiling Standard
- Sample cookie files and code
- Advice on blending cookies and Java
- Better ways to track site usage
- Simulated cookies for browsers that can't handle them
- Alternative routes when users hostile to cookies have turned them off
- The lowdown on higher-level user verification methods, such as digital signatures and encryption
- Site architecture considerations

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon St. Laurent is an experienced Web developer who has been involved with hypertext since 1989 and the World Wide Web since 1994. He has worked for a number of multimedia and Web design firms on projects for clients from start-up small businesses to Fortune 500 companies. Currently he is on the staff of Systems Integration and Support Services, Inc. St. Laurent is also the author of *Dynamic HTML: A Primer*. He lives in Greensboro, North Carolina.

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